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General Assembly
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Agenda item 66 (v)
General and complete disarmament: the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects

Security Council
Fifty-eighth year

Letter dated 22 January 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from the Government of the Republic of Panama, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the communiqué issued on 20 January 2003 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Panama concerning the report of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States on the diversion of Nicaraguan arms to the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the text of this letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 66 (v), and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ramón A. **Morales**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

03-22261 (E) 270103 280103

Annex to the letter dated 22 January 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Communiqué issued on 20 January 2003 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning the report of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States on the diversion of Nicaraguan arms to the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia

1. The investigation conducted by the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (OAS), at the request of the President of the Republic of Panama, Mireya Moscoso, and supported by the Governments of Colombia and Nicaragua, confirmed the forgery of the purported purchase order of the Panamanian National Police that was used to procure the shipment of Nicaraguan arms that was then diverted to Colombia and ended up in the hands of the so-called United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia.

2. The investigation, which was entrusted by the Secretary-General of OAS, César Gaviria, to Ambassador Morris D. Busby, a retired official of the United States of America Department of State, who was the United States representative in Colombia, concluded with the submission to the ambassadors to the OAS of the report to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the three Governments, which, in addition to confirming that the purported purchase order had been forged, concluded, inter alia, that:

(a) "The Panamanian authorities were involved in neither the purchase nor diversion of the weapons" to Colombia.

(b) "The Government of Nicaragua had failed to comply with a number of the provisions of the Inter-American Convention against Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials (CIFTA), to which Nicaragua is a State party", and that, moreover, "the Nicaraguan authorities are guilty of professional negligence for their failure to verify whether the Panamian National Police was indeed the end purchaser in the arms transaction".

3. The Republic of Panama, as a State party to CIFTA, hereby reiterates its intention to observe, abide by and implement the provisions of the Convention, since it is the appropriate instrument for preventing the occurrence of acts such as those that gave rise to the investigation carried out by the General Secretariat of OAS.

4. In this connection, the Government of President Mireya Moscoso wishes to reiterate its proposal made to the Permanent Council of OAS, on 15 May 2002, for the adoption of complementary norms to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of the implementation of the Convention.

5. The Government of Panama thanks the Secretary-General of OAS, César Gaviria, for his prompt response to the request of the Governments of Colombia, Nicaragua and Panama to conduct an impartial and objective investigation of all the facts related to this case, as well as the investigating team, headed by Ambassador Morris D. Busby, for its professionalism and diligence, and for the recommendations contained in the report, to which it will give due attention and ensure its follow-up.

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Agenda item 31
Elimination of unilateral extraterritorial coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic compulsion

Letter dated 20 January 2003 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the response of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation to the decision of the United States of America to extend the term of the Libya Sanctions Act for a further year beginning on 7 January 2003.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Ahmed A. **Own**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

03-22249 (E) 270103 280103

Response of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation to the decision of the United States of America to extend the term of the Libya Sanctions Act

On 2 January 2003, the President of the United States of America, George W. Bush, addressed a letter to the speakers of the United States House of Representatives and Senate informing them of his decision to extend the comprehensive sanctions imposed on the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for a further year beginning on 7 January 2003. That means the continuation of the freezing of Libyan assets in United States banks, the barring of Libyan students from pursuing advanced studies in the United States and a ban on the export to the Jamahiriya of United States technical equipment.

The great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya expresses its extreme displeasure and its amazement at this measure and finds it in contradiction with events, particularly the positive attitudes adopted by the Jamahiriya with regard to the improvement of relations between the two countries.

The United States administration's extension of the so-called "Libya Sanctions Act" represents a flagrant violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the norms of international law governing relations among States and the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and by international and regional organizations, in particular, General Assembly resolution 57/5 of 16 October 2002.

By this decision, the United States administration has sought to delude world public opinion by linking Security Council resolutions 731 (1992), 748 (1992) and 883 (1993) to the unilateral coercive measures imposed by the United States of America on the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya since 1986, although no such connection exists, because the United States measure preceded the Security Council resolutions and the reference to these resolutions has no other explanation save that it represents an attempt to confer legitimacy on the unilateral United States measures and confirmation of the premeditated intent to justify its continuation.

In his letter, the United States President said that one of the reasons for extension of the term of the coercive United States measures was the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya's failure so far to comply with its obligations under Security Council resolutions. This argument not only ignores the positions expressed by many international and regional organizations, namely that the Jamahiriya has complied with all these resolutions, but it is also contrary to the conclusions arrived at by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his report to the Security Council under paragraph 6 of resolution 883 (1993), in which he stated clearly that the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had complied with all the requirements of the Security Council resolutions relating to the dispute concerning the Lockerbie incident.

The great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya hopes that the United States of America will take into account the positive developments in relations between the two countries arising from the Jamahiriya's flexible position aimed at

the settlement of the problems between them and trusts that the United States Government will respond to the repeated appeals from international and regional organizations to rescind these unilateral coercive measures, which are not conducive to the establishment of balanced friendly relations governed by mutual respect and regard for the common interests of both parties.

Tripoli, 11 January 2003

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Fifty-seventh session
Agenda items 36 and 160

Security Council
Fifty-eighth year

The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 27 January 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing to draw your attention to the latest terrorist incident to imperil peace and security along the Israel-Lebanon border.

This past Tuesday, 21 January, at approximately 3 p.m. (local time), Hizbullah terrorists fired anti-tank rockets and mortar shells at positions on the Israeli side of the Blue Line in the Mount Dov area. The unprovoked cross-border attack lasted about 30 minutes, during which time approximately 25 missiles and shells were fired. No injuries were reported as a result of the assault, but some damage was sustained by a nearby Israeli Defense Forces outpost. Hizbullah interrupted programming on its satellite television station, Al Manar, to claim responsibility for the attack.

This attack is merely the latest in a long series of cross-border attacks perpetrated by Hizbullah since Israel's complete withdrawal from Lebanon in May 2000, in full and confirmed compliance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978). That resolution further required the Government of Lebanon to establish its effective authority in the area and restore international peace and security. These obligations have been affirmed repeatedly in subsequent Security Council resolutions.

To date, Lebanon has not taken any significant measures to fulfil its obligations, nor has it acted to bring its policies into accord with the global campaign against terrorism. Consequently, Lebanon stands in breach of international law and Security Council resolutions 425 (1978), 426 (1978), 1310 (2000), 1337 (2001), 1365 (2001), 1391 (2002) and 1428 (2002), which call for the restoration of international peace and security and the return of effective Lebanese authority in the area. The Government of Lebanon is also in violation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and established principles of international law, which call upon all States to refrain from providing any support, whether active or passive, to all

03-22489 (E) 280103

persons or entities involved in terrorist acts, and to ensure that their territory is not used as a base for cross-border attacks.

Rather than fulfilling its obligations and thereby preventing a further deterioration in the situation along the Blue Line, Lebanon has continued to permit Hizbullah complete freedom of movement and action, and has even allowed the organization to strengthen and fortify its presence in the area, as acknowledged in the recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2003/38). The Government of Syria, which provides critical financial, logistical and political support to Hizbullah, and provides its leadership and operatives with safe harbour in Syrian-controlled territory, also bears responsibility for Hizbullah's actions and for the continuing instability along the Blue Line.

Hizbullah's actions not only are a danger to both Israeli and Lebanese civilians, but they also carry with them the potential of a dangerous regional escalation. Together with the belligerent statements of its leaders, Hizbullah, an organization with extensive terrorist networks and connections around the globe, has clearly signalled its intent to ignite a broader confrontation. While Israel is doing its utmost to act with restraint, while reserving its right to take steps to defend its citizens, it is the responsibility of the Government of Lebanon to bring an end to Hizbullah's illegal activities and prevent the organization from further destabilizing the region.

Both the Secretary-General and the Security Council have repeatedly emphasized Lebanon's obligation to respect the integrity of the Blue Line and ensure a calm environment in southern Lebanon. In view of the upcoming renewal of the mandate of United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, Israel reiterates its call on Lebanon to fulfil its obligations under resolution 425 (1978) and subsequent resolutions, as well as resolution 1373 (2001) regarding the suppression of terrorist acts. The international community bears a responsibility to impress upon Lebanon and Syria that security and stability will remain in jeopardy so long as they fail to fulfil their most basic obligations to prevent Lebanese territory from serving as a base for terrorism, end the activities of terrorist organizations currently operating freely in Lebanese territory and act to restore international peace and security along the Blue Line.

This letter is submitted as a follow-up to previous letters concerning the dangerous situation in southern Lebanon caused by the illegal attacks perpetrated by Hizbullah across the Blue Line, dated 10 December 2002 (A/57/642-S/2002/1347), 5 September 2002 (A/56/1032-S/2002/986), 8 July 2002 (A/56/1001-S/2002/743), 10 April 2002 (A/56/913-S/2002/374), 3 April 2002 (A/56/899-S/2002/348), 2 April 2002 (A/56/898-S/2002/345), 21 March 2002 (A/56/884-S/2002/301), 24 January 2002 (A/56/793-S/2002/115), 17 January 2002 (A/56/778-S/2002/79), 24 October 2001 (A/56/507-S/2001/1012), 5 October 2001 (A/56/443-S/2001/942), 6 July 2001 (A/56/161-S/2001/673), 16 April 2001 (S/2001/367), 16 February 2001 (A/55/792-S/2001/142), 6 February 2001 (A/55/767-S/2001/111), 26 November 2000 (S/2000/1121), 23 October 2000 (S/2000/1011), 19 October 2000 (S/2000/1002) and 7 October 2000 (S/2000/969).

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 160 and 36, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dan **Gillerman**
Permanent Representative

United Nations A/57/718

General Assembly

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Agenda items 122 and 126

Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the procurement of goods and services through letters of assist

Note by the Secretary-General*

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 48/218 B of 29 July 1994 and 54/244 of 23 December 1999, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit, for the attention of the General Assembly, the attached report, conveyed to him by the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services, on the procurement of goods and services through letters of assist.

2. The Secretary-General takes note of the findings and concurs with the recommendations made in the report, which will improve the Secretariat's practices and procedures for procurement through letters of assist.

* The present report could not be submitted prior to the deadline because the review had not been concluded at that time.

03-22694 (E) 130203

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the procurement of goods and services through letters of assist

Summary

During the period from February to April 2002, the Office of Internal Oversight Services conducted an audit of the procurement of goods and services by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations through the use of letters of assist. The main objectives of the audit were to determine the effectiveness of this procurement method and the Department's compliance with the relevant Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations. Of the 274 letters of assist valued at $183 million issued by the Department during the period 2000-2001, the Office of Internal Oversight Services reviewed a sample of 35, with a total value of $71.4 million.

The audit showed that the Procurement Division of the Office of Central Support Services had not yet prepared revised guidelines for administering letters of assist, although such guidelines were expected by March 1998. Further, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had not drawn up a comprehensive list of goods and services considered to be of a strictly military nature, which are not available through commercial sources. The Office of Internal Oversight Services found that letters of assist sometimes included goods and services that could be procured from commercial sources through competitive bidding. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations Finance Management and Support Service made payments totalling $11.6 million before the relevant letters of assist were completed and/or signed by the providing Government, in contravention of financial rule 110.22, which requires that payments be based on written contracts. The Finance Management and Support Service also processed claims for goods and services that were not supported by letters of assist. In the opinion of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, such claims require review and authorization by the Controller.

The Office of Internal Oversight Services also noted that the criteria used by the Department for selecting Governments to provide the required goods and services were unclear. In the view of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, a competitive selection process is needed to increase transparency and ensure more economical procurement of such goods and services through letters of assist.

The Office of Internal Oversight Services made a number of recommendations for addressing the issues discussed above. In particular, it recommended that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations:

(a) Ensure that letters of assist are expeditiously prepared and submitted for Government signature in order to adequately obligate funds and support payments;

(b) Promulgate, in consultation with the Procurement Division, revised guidelines for letters of assist that: (i) specify the prerequisites for their use; (ii) include procedures for selecting the providing Government; and (iii) require the use of cost-comparison methods;

(c) Discontinue the use of letters of assist for procuring medical supplies and transfer this responsibility to the Procurement Division, except for those supplies which have to be provided under memorandums of understanding with Member States;

(d) Establish, in cooperation with the Procurement Division, a roster of Governments willing to provide goods and services under letters of assist and develop competitive procurement procedures for their award;

(e) Ensure that the issuance of letters of assist is based on adequate cost comparison and analysis of competitive offers obtained from the largest possible number of Member States.

The Office of Internal Oversight Services also recommended that the Controller review and authorize the payment of claims that are not supported by a duly signed letter of assist after obtaining the necessary justification for such claims from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

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I. Introduction

1. During the period from February to April 2002, the Office of Internal Oversight Services conducted an audit of the procurement of goods and services by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations using letters of assist. The audit was intended to determine the effectiveness of procurement through the use of letters of assist and whether the Department was complying with relevant Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations.* Of the 274 letters of assist valued at $183 million that were issued by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations during the period 2000-2001, the Office of Internal Oversight Services reviewed a sample of 35, with a total value of $71.4 million.

2. According to paragraph 15.01 of the United Nations Procurement Manual, a letter of assist is a contracting document issued by the United Nations authorizing a Government to provide goods or services to a United Nations peacekeeping operation. Letters of assist are to be issued for procuring goods and services that are of a strictly military nature or pattern, or when such goods and services cannot be procured commercially. The Office of Internal Oversight Services noted that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had taken the initiative to transfer to the Procurement Division, Office of Central Support Services, the responsibility for procuring goods and services that were not of a strictly military nature or pattern. The Department and the Procurement Division had agreed that the normal procedures for procurement through competitive bidding would apply for such requirements.

3. A draft of the present report was transmitted to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts for review. Their comments have been incorporated in the report, where appropriate, and are shown in italics.

II. Delegation of authority for issuing letters of assist

4. The Office of Internal Oversight Services found that the delegation of authority for procurement through letters of assist had not been updated since 1981. The existing delegation of authority, which dates from September 1981, authorizes the Director of the Field Operations Division, Office of General Services, in the Department of Administration and Management, to issue letters of assist. Although the Field Administration and Logistics Division was subsequently established within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, there was no formal transfer of such authority from the former Department of Administration and Management to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

5. The Office of Internal Oversight Services further noted that section chiefs within the Field Administration and Logistics Division (now known as the Logistics Support Division) of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had been signing letters of assist without having been delegated the proper authority by the Assistant

* It should be noted that, by its decision 57/573, the General Assembly adopted revised Financial Regulations, effective 1 January 2003 (see A/57/396). Those regulations and the related financial rules will be promulgated in a revised Secretary-General's bulletin early in 2003. The review by the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the proposed new financial rules indicated that the rules cited in the report remain substantially unchanged.

Secretary-General for Central Support Services and the Controller. This constituted a breach of financial rule 110.16, which states that contracts for the purchase, rental or sale of services, supplies, equipment or other requirements shall be entered into on behalf of the United Nations only by officials duly authorized for the purpose. In the opinion of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, clear delegation of authority needs to be established to ensure that only duly authorized officials enter into commitments through letters of assist.

III. Need to strengthen internal controls in the financial administration of letters of assist

6. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations Finance Management and Support Service obligated funds and processed the related payments, even though the relevant letters of assist had not been formalized. Of the 35 letters of assist reviewed by the Office of Internal Oversight Services, payments amounting to $11.6 million in respect of 18 cases had been made before the letters of assist were completed and/or countersigned by the providing Government. This practice was contrary to financial rule 110.22, which requires that payments be based on written contracts or purchase orders. *The Department of Peacekeeping Operations commented that, in most cases, the letters of assist had been signed by the United Nations and were only pending signature by the providing Governments. Furthermore, although letters of assist had not been concluded in these cases, the concerned missions had confirmed the delivery of the goods and services and the payments were processed only after verification of documentation supporting the deliveries.* In the opinion of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, however, the provisions of financial rule 110.22 constitute an internal control mechanism that needs to be complied with in order to minimize the risk of disputes. The Office of Internal Oversight Services is particularly concerned about the significant number of instances — about 50 per cent of the cases reviewed — in which the applicable financial rule was not complied with.

7. The audit also found that, in certain cases, Governments had provided services even before the Department could raise letters of assist in writing, or while the letter of assist was still a draft. In such cases, the Finance Management and Support Service treated the requests for reimbursement as "claims" and processed them without obtaining the necessary ex post facto clearance by the Headquarters Committee on Contracts. In 1995, the Finance Management and Support Service had requested the Controller's office to allow the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to process claims without a letter of assist because the Headquarters Committee on Contracts had refused to treat those claims as ex post facto cases and, consequently, had not made a recommendation. The Controller's office had acceded to the request, subject to certification by the Department's Director of the Field Administration and Logistics Division that the claims were being reimbursed at a reasonable cost. In October 2001, however, the Finance Management and Support Service began to certify such claims, noting that approval by the Director of the Field Administration and Logistics Division added "no real value to the process". The Controller's office took note of the practice, but did not formally authorize it.

8. In the opinion of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, such de facto devolution of authority to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to make

payments without formal obligations represents a major deviation from the internal controls established by the Organization. Further, in the view of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the Controller should authorize such payments, based on full justification provided in each case by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

IV. Guidelines for administering letters of assist

9. Although the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of procurement reform (A/52/534) indicated that the Procurement Division would prepare revised guidelines for the administration of letters of assist by March 1998, those guidelines have not been completed. In view of the deficiencies noted during a follow-up audit of the implementation of procurement reform (A/55/746), the Office of Internal Oversight Services had recommended that the Procurement Division revise the Procurement Manual to specify the procedures for processing letters of assist, including the use of comparable cost data and proper justification of decisions. In February 2002, the Department of Management informed the Office of Internal Oversight Services that the revised Procurement Manual would specify the procedures for processing letters of assist, and that the Procurement Division had initiated consultations with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to develop streamlined procedures that allow for the consideration of commercial aspects when ensuring that due process is followed when processing letters of assist.

10. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations had taken the initiative to prepare written operating procedures pertaining to letters of assist budgetary and payment processes. However, these procedures had not yet been approved or implemented. Furthermore, in view of their limited scope, the procedures do not address procurement-related issues pertaining to the use of letters of assist. Comprehensive guidelines are critical to ensuring consistency and economy in the use of letters of assist to procure goods and services for peacekeeping operations.

V. Need for proper justification of the use of letters of assist

11. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations had not drawn up a comprehensive list of requirements that could be considered to be of a strictly military nature and not available through commercial channels. Letters of assist requirements considered by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to be of a strictly military nature often included goods and services required by troop-contributing Governments for their own contingents, such as transportation to and from the mission area, although some of those services were available commercially. *The Department of Peacekeeping Operations commented that it was a common practice for troop-contributing countries to deploy, rotate and/or repatriate their own troops. Such requests from troop-contributing countries were accepted as long as the cost thereof was less or equal to comparable proposals from commercial vendors. The Department also stated that it was exploring the possibility of including such requirements in the memorandums of understanding signed with the troop-contributing countries.* In the view of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the decision to use letters of assist for such requirements should be based on appropriate cost-benefit analyses showing the advantages of the selected option.

12. The sample review by the Office of Internal Oversight Services of five cases of long-term air transportation procured through letters of assist indicated that all the cases were subsequently converted into commercial contracts. The Procurement Division routinely procured air transportation services through commercial channels, which raises questions about the appropriateness of using letters of assist for such requirements. During 2001 for example, the Procurement Division processed 533 requisitions for the provision of air transportation services at a cost of about $609 million. Procuring long-term air transportation services through letters of assist unduly restricted competition and undermined selection process transparency, raising concerns about the fairness and economy of such procurement. *The Department of Peacekeeping Operations clarified that it has been working with the Procurement Division to transfer responsibility for a number of procurement activities previously undertaken through letters of assist to the Procurement Division.* Transferring the responsibility for procuring goods and services that are not of a strictly military nature or pattern to the Procurement Division will facilitate wider participation of vendors and increase transparency, objectivity and economy in peacekeeping procurement.

13. The justification for using letters of assist was sometimes unclear. For example, in five cases, out of seven letters of assist processed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations Medical Support Unit, the statements of award did not mention the conditions that had necessitated the use of letters of assist. During 2001, the Department issued 21 such letters of assist for the procurement of medical supplies, at a total cost of $764,592. In the view of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, since the Procurement Division processes a number of requisitions for medical supplies, it should also handle the procurement of medical supplies for peacekeeping missions by using generic specifications, unless a Government can justify the need for specialized products for its troops. In the latter case, it would be preferable to include such specialized requirements in the memorandum of understanding at the mission planning stage.

VI. Lack of competition in the award of letters of assist

14. During the period from 1999 to 2001, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations issued 331 letters of assist invoking financial rule 110.19 (h), that is, that "competitive bidding will not give satisfactory results". However, in most of the cases reviewed, the Office of Internal Oversight Services found that it would have been possible to obtain commercial bids. Although the letter of assist procedure was initially created to complement existing memorandums of understanding for requirements that were unforeseen during mission planning, it has evolved and become a standard mode of procurement for peacekeeping missions, which the Department justified by the inability to obtain competitive bids. This deviation from the original purpose of letters of assist has resulted in the lack of competition in procurement awards.

15. Generally, for long-term air transportation services (whether deemed to be of a strictly military nature or not), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations did not issue formal requests for proposal to Governments. Furthermore, the basis for inviting a particular Government to submit an offer was unclear. The Office of Internal Oversight Services noted that, in two instances, one Member State officially complained that it had not been invited by the Department to submit an offer. In

another case, the Office of Internal Oversight Services found that a letter of assist had been issued in the amount of $10.5 million for the provision of air transportation on the basis of a Member State's expression of interest. This letter of assist was subsequently cancelled and the required services were procured from a commercial source at the much lower cost of $6.5 million.

16. In all the cases described above, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations generally could not justify the selection of a specific Member State to submit proposals; nor could the Office of Internal Oversight Services elicit the reasons for restricting the invitations to only four Member States. The current practice of selecting Member States for the provision of goods and services through letters of assist lacks transparency and may result in uneconomical procurement. In the view of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the selection of Member States to provide goods and services should be based on competitive offers. For that purpose, a roster of commodities to be procured through letters of assist needs to be established based on Governments' expressions of interest and their ability to provide the required goods and services.

VII. Recommendations

17. The Office of Internal Oversight Services made the following recommendations for improving the practices and procedures for procurement through letters of assist.

Recommendation 1

18. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations should obtain appropriate delegation of authority to procure goods and services for peacekeeping operations through letters of assist. This delegated authority should be limited to clearly identified goods and services of a strictly military nature, which cannot be procured commercially (AP2002/55/01).**

19. *The Department of Peacekeeping Operations commented that, in January 1997, it had reconfirmed its delegated authority with the Department of Management for the processing of letters of assist. However, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations will seek a revised delegation of authority from the Department of Management after the new guidelines for letters of assist are finalized.*

Recommendation 2

20. In order to adequately obligate funds and support payments, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should ensure that letters of assist are expeditiously prepared and submitted for Government signature (AP2002/55/9/02).

21. *The Department of Peacekeeping Operations accepted the recommendation and stated that, since January 2002, it had taken steps to ensure that letters of assist were processed expeditiously.*

** The symbols in parentheses in this section refer to an internal code used by the Office of Internal Oversight Services for recording recommendations.

Recommendation 3

22. The Controller should review and authorize the payment of claims that are not supported by a duly signed letter of assist after obtaining the necessary justification for such claims from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (AP2002/55/9/03).

23. *The Controller accepted the recommendation and stated that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had been advised accordingly.*

Recommendation 4

24. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in consultation with the Procurement Division, should promulgate revised guidelines for letters of assist that adequately provide for: (a) meeting the prerequisites for their use; (b) procedures for selecting the providing Government; and (c) using cost-comparison methods (AP2002/55/9/04).

25. *The Department of Peacekeeping Operations accepted the recommendation.*

Recommendation 5

26. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations should ensure that the basis for the use of letters of assist in exceptional circumstances is accurately and comprehensively described in the statement of award (AP2002/55/9/05).

27. *The Department of Peacekeeping Operations concurred with the recommendation and stated that, since late 2001, justifications for exceptions were being provided in the statements of award.*

Recommendation 6

28. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations should discontinue the use of letters of assist for procuring medical supplies and transfer this responsibility to the Procurement Division, except for supplies that are required to be provided under memorandums of understanding (AP2002/55/9/06).

29. *The Department of Peacekeeping Operations accepted the recommendation.*

Recommendation 7

30. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations should, in cooperation with the Procurement Division, establish a roster of Governments willing to provide goods and services under letters of assist, and develop competitive procurement procedures for their award (AP2002/55/9/07).

31. *The Department of Peacekeeping Operations accepted the recommendation and stated that it would work closely with the Procurement Division in that regard.*

Recommendation 8

32. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations should ensure that the issuance of letters of assist is based on adequate cost comparisons and analysis of competitive offers obtained from the largest possible number of Member States (AP2002/55/9/08).

33. *The Department of Peacekeeping Operations accepted the recommendation, but commented that there were other factors that guided the selection of troop-contributing countries, some of which were beyond the control of the Organization.*

(*Signed*) Dileep **Nair**
Under-Secretary-General
for Internal Oversight Services

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Security Council
Fifty-eighth year

The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 27 January 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing to draw your attention to several acts of Palestinian terrorism to target Israeli civilians in recent days.

On Thursday, 23 January, at approximately 8.15 p.m. (local time), Palestinian terrorists ambushed an Israel Defense Forces patrol on the road between Beit Hagai and Kiryat Arba. Three Israeli soldiers — Cpl. Ronald Berrer, age 20, Cpl. Assaf Bitan, age 19 and St.-Sgt. Ya'akov Naim, age 20 — were ki[illegible]d in the attack. The terrorist organization Hamas claimed responsibility.

Meanwhile, Palestinian terrorists have increased their indiscriminate missile attacks on Israeli towns and villages in southern Israel. On Tuesday, 21 January, Palestinian terrorists launched a rocket that landed and exploded in the living room of a private residence, while children slept in the next room. Only by chance, none of the residents of the home were injured. Then on Thursday, 23 January, the southern Israeli town of Sderot came under fire from Kassam rockets. Schoolchildren in the town were herded into underground shelters. One of the rockets landed in the yard of a private home, injuring a woman hanging laundry. Two other rockets landed in a field. The terrorist organization Hamas claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement carried on Hizbullah's Al-Manar satellite television network based in Beirut.

Also last week, Israeli Border Police averted a major terrorist attack when they intercepted a suspicious vehicle trying to infiltrate Israel near Umm al Fahm. The car was carrying 300 kilograms of explosives and three gas canisters connected to a detonator. The four occupants of the vehicle escaped to Palestinian Authority-controlled territory.

Recent events, in particular the increasing and criminal use of rocket attacks on civilian towns, confirm the ongoing failure of the Palestinian leadership to take even minimal steps to calm tensions and to bring an end to terrorism and incitement, as explicitly called for by the Security Council. Efforts by Palestinian terrorist groups to target Israeli civilians go on unimpeded, while the relentless incitement in

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the official Palestinian media and educational institutions continues to swell the ranks of willing volunteers for terrorist attacks, including suicide missions. A poem written by a 12-year-old published on the children's page of the official Palestinian Authority daily *Al-Ayyam* expressed the author's longing to die: "I have responded to my country's call; My honor shall not fall; My *Shahada* [martyrdom] is in my hands; I shall redeem my country with my soul."

Palestinian incitement and glorification of terrorism and suicide bombing has even extended into the realm of children's sporting activities with the recent sponsorship by the Palestinian Authority of a children's football tournament in which teams were named in tribute to suicide bombers. Among those celebrated was Abdel-Basset Odeh, the terrorist responsible for the Passover massacre on 17 March 2002, in which 29 Israelis were killed and more than 60 were wounded.

Complementing the Palestinian Authority's active encouragement of youngsters to respect and emulate the actions of terrorists is its ongoing refusal to bring an end to the activities of known terrorist organizations that operate freely in Palestinian territory. The Palestinian Authority's failure even to attempt to restrain terrorist groups like Hamas was confirmed recently by the group's spiritual leader, Ahmed Yassin, who, speaking from his home in Gaza where he is given safe haven by the Palestinian Authority, asserted that the Palestinian leadership had given its tacit approval to Hamas by not doing anything to stop attacks. Said Yassin: "They turn a blind eye or turn their back."

In such an atmosphere, where children are taught to revere and emulate mass murderers and where known terrorist organizations that reject any return to dialogue and negotiations are operating freely with the approval of the Palestinian leadership, Israel has no choice but to take measures to protect its citizens from the unrelenting threat of terrorist activity. So long as the Palestinian leadership refuses to take even the most basic steps to fulfil its obligations, Israel's countermeasures will remain an indispensable component of its exercise of its right to self-defence. The Palestinian leadership must be held accountable for these daily crimes which violate the most basic principles of international law and endanger both Israeli and Palestinian civilians.

While the murder of innocents is viewed by the Palestinian leadership as a legitimate political tool, and its perpetrators are glorified as heroes and martyrs worthy of emulation, any progress on a negotiated political settlement will be impossible. Israel therefore calls once again on the Palestinian leadership to respect its obligations to end all acts of violence, terrorism and incitement as called for by the Security Council and international law, to prevent its territory from serving as a base for terrorist attacks, and to take active steps to restore an atmosphere conducive to the resumption of negotiations for the benefit of both peoples.

I submit this letter in follow-up to numerous letters detailing the campaign of Palestinian terrorism that began in September 2000.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 160 and 36, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dan **Gillerman**
Permanent Representative

United Nations A/57/720–S/2003/118

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Security Council

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General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 66 (v)
General and complete disarmament: the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects

Security Council
Fifty-eighth year

Letter dated 30 January 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Nicaragua to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the communiqué issued on 20 January 2003 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Nicaragua (see annex) concerning the report of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States on the diversion of Nicaraguan arms to the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia.

In this respect, and on behalf of my Government, I request you to arrange for the text of this letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 66 (v), and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Eduardo J. **Sevilla Somoza**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

03-23211 (E) 030203 030203

Annex to the letter dated 30 January 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Nicaragua to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Communiqué issued on 20 January 2003 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning the report of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States on the diversion of Nicaraguan arms to the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia

1. The Government of Nicaragua thanks the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), César Gaviria Trujillo, and the Assistant Secretary General, Ambassador Luigi R. Einaudi, for the report submitted to the three countries, and extends special thanks to the team consisting of Ambassador Morris Busby, Christopher Hernández, Michael Sullivan and Jimena Duque.

2. The Government of Nicaragua particularly appreciates the spirit of the report, since the investigation requested from the Secretary General of OAS by the Governments of Colombia, Nicaragua and Panama, on the initiative of the President of Nicaragua, Mr. Enrique Bolaños Geyer, is helping to strengthen the foundations for the maintenance of peace and security in the region.

3. The report shows that the operation was planned outside Nicaragua, that both our country, and Panama and Colombia, were the victims of an activity by organized crime, and that this should motivate us to redouble our efforts with the international community to combat this phenomenon.

4. It is also indicated in the report, referring to Nicaragua, that "the diversion was made possible by negligent actions" and that "there are significant weaknesses in Nicaraguan law". We will work in cooperation with the States members of OAS to harmonize and standardize mechanisms for the effective implementation of the Inter-American Convention against Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials (CIFTA).

5. We are requesting cooperation and technical assistance from OAS in order to develop model national legislation which would incorporate the monitoring mechanisms established by the Convention and would serve as a basis for other States of the inter-American system.

6. At the beginning of the presidential term of President Bolaños, and in view of this inherited situation, we undertook the formulation of a draft law on monitoring, manufacture and transfers of weapons that would clearly establish the responsibilities of each of the State institutions, as well as the appropriate mechanisms. In December 2002, at the thirty-second session of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD-OAS), the Government of Nicaragua put forward an initiative for the formulation of regulations governing the brokerage of arms sales, which was unanimously approved by OAS.

7. During the 1990s, under the Presidency of Ms. Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, Nicaragua spearheaded an intensive and unique disarmament process, and promoted a new model of democratic security at the regional level. Nicaragua is the Latin American country which has voluntarily destroyed the largest quantities of weapons, and it has no landmines in its arsenal. This has made it possible to initiate an exemplary process of modernization and professionalization of the Nicaraguan

army. We believe that this process should continue to be intensified at both national and regional levels.

8. It is important to announce, in this respect, that Nicaragua will continue to assume effective leadership in the area of arms limitation in the region, within the framework of a reasonable balance of forces, and for that reason we are carrying out phased initiatives and projects on this matter within the Central American Security Commission.

9. Nicaragua is willing to have an immediate visual inspection of the arms and ammunition inventory of the Nicaraguan national police and army, in the same spirit of openness and transparency which, since the 1990s, has made possible the provision of inventories to the United Nations, OAS and the Central American Integration System (SICA). We will promote mechanisms for full monitoring and verification at the regional level of the arms and ammunition inventories of countries and their transfers. The Ministries of the Interior and of Defence are being requested to provide a plan for a mechanism for the periodic monitoring and verification of weapons inventories.

10. The President of the Republic has designated an inter-agency investigatory commission, consisting of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, the Interior and Defence and the Attorney-General's Office, to consider and follow up on the OAS recommendations included in the report of the General Secretariat, and we will contact the other countries mentioned in the report (Colombia, Guatemala, Israel, Mexico and Panama) so that, within the framework of mutual cooperation in the face of international organized crime, we will seek formulas to enable us to combat transnational crime.

Managua, 20 January 2003

United Nations A/57/721

General Assembly

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Fifty-seventh session
Agenda items 111 and 118

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Human resources management

Gratis personnel provided by Governments and other entities

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present document contains the annual report of the Secretary-General on the use of gratis personnel. The annual report concerns the situation during the period from 1 January to 31 December 2002.

03-23438 (E) 100203

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 51/243 of 15 September 1997, in paragraph 12 of which the Secretary-General was requested to report annually on the use of gratis personnel, indicating, inter alia, their nationality, the duration of their service and the functions performed. The report updates the previous annual report (A/56/839) and covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2002.

2. By General Assembly decision 55/462 of 12 April 2001, the frequency of reporting on the situation of gratis personnel provided by Governments and other entities was changed from quarterly to annual, commencing with the period ending 31 December 2001.

II. Type I gratis personnel

3. Table 1 provides data on type I gratis personnel who serve under an established regime.[1] These are interns, associate experts and technical cooperation experts obtained on a non-reimbursable loan.[2] The total number for each category as at 31 December 2002 is compared with the numbers contained in previous reports.

4. The overall number of type I gratis personnel has increased by 60.9 per cent, from 187 personnel as at 31 December 2001 to 301 personnel by 31 December 2002. The overall increase is mainly due to a 108 per cent increase in the number of interns (type Ia), from 68 as at 31 December 2001 to 142 by 31 December 2002. The number of associate experts (type Ib) increased from 105 in December 2001 to 124 in December 2002, an increase of 18.1 per cent. The number of technical cooperation experts (type Ic) increased by 150 per cent, from 14 to 35, over the reference period.

III. Type II gratis personnel

5. Table 2 provides information on the one type II gratis personnel in service as at 31 December 2002, by department, nationality, function and duration of service. The duration of engagement is more than one year and is expected to end on 31 December 2003.

6. Table 3 shows the evolution of type II gratis personnel during the period from 31 December 2001 to 31 December 2002, by department or office. The total number of one type II gratis personnel as at 31 December 2002 shows a decrease by 66 per cent compared with the total of three as at 31 December 2001.

7. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights separated one type II gratis personnel in 2002, who had been engaged as an indigenous people's rights lawyer.

8. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) separated one type II gratis personnel in 2002, who had been engaged as a health economist to provide Member States with policy advice.

9. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) engaged in 2001 a type II gratis personnel as a hydrology expert, whose services were provided

by the Government of Germany for a period of two years. As at 31 December 2002 he continues to perform his services, which are expected to end on 31 December 2003.

10. Table 4 shows the number of regular staff members in ESCWA where the type II gratis personnel performed functions as at 31 December 2002. The ratio of his representation to regular staff is 0.4 per cent.

Notes

[1] See section 1 of ST/AI/1999/6 of 28 May 1999 on gratis personnel.

[2] In conformity with the new personnel statute of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), which was established as a subsidiary body of the Security Council to replace the United Nations Special Commission as from 17 December 1999 (see A/51/688/Add.2, para. 4, and A/51/688/Add.3, para. 3), all type I gratis personnel were phased out by 30 September 2000.

Abbreviations used in the tables

ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNMOVIC	United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission
UNSCOM	United Nations Special Commission

Table 1
Evolution of type I gratis personnel

As at	*Interns*	*Associate experts*[a]	*Technical cooperation experts*[b]	*UNSCOM UNMOVIC*[c]	*Total*
31 October 1996	131	76	31	112	350
30 September 1997	195	72	32	109	408
30 September 1998	214	115	31	18	378
30 September 1999	296[d]	290[d]	18	25	629[d]
31 December 1999	43[d]	268[d]	16	25	352[d]
31 March 2000	10[d]	270[d]	13	19[d]	403[d]
30 June 2000	20[d]	271[d]	12[d]	15	504[d]
30 September 2000	151	250	11	0	412
31 December 2000	39	218	8	0	265
31 December 2001	68	105	14	0	187
31 December 2002	142	124	35	0	301

[a] 200 series.
[b] See ST/AI/231/Rev.1.
[c] See S/22508.
[d] Adjusted (see para. 2).

Table 2
Type II gratis personnel, by department, nationality, function and duration of service
(As at 31 December 2002)

Department	*Nationality*	*Function*	*Count*	*Duration of service*
ESCWA	Germany	Hydrology expert	1	More than one year

Table 3
Evolution of type II gratis personnel, by department or office
(31 December 2001-31 December 2002)

Department or office	*Reported on 31 December 2001*	*Reported on 31 December 2002*	*Change (%)*
ESCWA	1	1	(+0%)
OHCHR	1	0	-1 (-100%)
ECA	1	0	-1 (-100%)
Total	**3**	**1**	**-2 (-66%)**

Table 4
Number of regular staff in the department where the type II gratis personnel performed functions
(As at 31 December 2002)

Department	*Staff in the Professional and higher categories*	*Staff in the General Service and related categories*	*Total staff*	*Number of gratis personnel*	*Ratio of gratis personnel to staff (percentage)*
ESCWA	86	162	248	1	0.4

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United Nations A/57/722–S/2003/148

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Security Council

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Fifty-seventh session
Agenda items 36 and 160

The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Fifty-eighth year

Letter dated 4 February 2003 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I submit to you below a list of Israeli violations of Lebanese airspace which occurred from 26 January to 2 February 2003.

As can be seen from the annexed list, sporadic Israeli violations of Lebanese airspace occurred during that period but have suddenly increased over the past few days, so that during the period from 26 January to 2 February 2003 alone, 28 such violations occurred. The reports issued by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) indicate that many of those violations involved deep penetration into Lebanese territory by Israeli warplanes flying at low altitudes over populated areas of Lebanon and breaking the sound barrier. Lebanon wishes to emphasize that such flights by Israeli aircraft over Lebanese populated areas instil terror among Lebanese civilians, especially children, and therefore constitute a form of international terrorism.

Israeli aircraft, moreover, have continued to fly in the manner referred to by you in your previous reports, especially the last two (S/2002/746 of 12 July 2002 and S/2003/38 of 14 January 2003), namely by flying over the sea and then entering Lebanese airspace north of the area of operation of UNIFIL in order to avoid being observed and identified by UNIFIL.

Lebanon considers it important to point out that, given that the Israeli violations of the Blue Line and Lebanese airspace constitute unlawful acts of aggression and provocation, Lebanon will exercise its natural and lawful right of self-defence, opposing them with ground anti-aircraft fire. Moreover, it is neither logical nor just to equate the Israeli violations of Lebanese airspace with Lebanese opposition to them by means of ground anti-aircraft fire, because, were it not for the Israeli air violations, the Lebanese ground anti-aircraft batteries would not be firing. Consequently, the responsibility rests with Israel, which must put an end to its

03-24052 (E) 130203 130203

violations of Lebanese airspace and stop such violations from creating great tension and destabilizing the region.

These violations are part of a long, continuous succession of daily violations the Blue Line carried out by Israel against Lebanese sovereignty by land, sea a air, in flagrant contravention of the relevant Security Council resolutions, particular resolution 425 (1978), as reported to you in our previous communicatio dated 22 May 2000 (S/2000/465), 24 June 2000 (S/2000/624), 27 June 200 (S/2000/626), 11 August 2000 (S/2000/794), 2 November 2000 (S/2000/1066 6 November 2000 (S/2000/1071), 10 November 2000 (S/2000/1087), 17 Novemb 2000 (S/2000/1102), 26 November 2000 (S/2000/1118), 8 December 200 (S/2000/1172), 20 December 2000 (S/2000/1223), 29 December 200 (S/2000/1258), 31 December 2000 (S/2001/1), 15 January 2001 (S/2001/4 17 January 2001 (S/2001/56), 17 January 2001 (S/2001/62), 5 February 20 (S/2001/110), 11 February 2001 (S/2001/164), 1 March 2001 (S/2001/184 19 March 2001 (S/2001/243), 2 April 2001 (S/2001/313), 10 April 200 (S/2001/344), 12 April 2001 (S/2001/355), 17 April 2001 (S/2001/371), 30 Ap 2001 (S/2001/430), 8 May 2001 (S/2001/454), 14 May 2001 (S/2001/476), 14 M 2001 (S/2001/478), 17 May 2001 (S/2001/502), 29 May 2001 (S/2001/531), 18 Ju 2001 (S/2001/606), 25 June 2001 (S/2001/630), 27 June 2001 (S/2001/64 24 September 2001 (S/2001/901), 23 October 2001 (S/2001/1004), 28 Novemb 2001 (S/2001/1119), 11 December 2001 (S/2001/1117), 18 December 20 (S/2001/1206), 31 December 2001 (S/2001/1337), 21 January 2002 (S/2002/9 24 January 2002 (S/2002/114), 13 February 2002 (S/2002/167), 4 March 20 (S/2002/247), 12 April 2002 (S/2002/414), 24 April 2002 (S/2002/480), 13 M 2002 (S/2002/538), 15 May 2002 (S/2002/543), 21 May 2002 (S/2002/564), 10 Ju 2002 (S/2002/651), 20 June 2002 (S/2002/687), 11 July 2002 (S/2002/75 14 August 2002 (S/2002/935), 8 October 2002 (S/2002/1123), 8 November 20 (S/2002/1235).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session, under agenda items 36 and 1 and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Houssam **Di**
Chargé d'affaires

Annex

Information summary

Subject: Israeli air violations

Between 1130 and 1222 hours on 26 January 2003 four Israeli warplanes overflew the sea off Shikka at a distance of 12 miles from the coast and reached the Bsharre, Uyun al-Siman, Dahr al-Baydar, and Damur areas. They circled over the areas of Shikka, Batrun, Byblos and Jounieh, thus violating Lebanese airspace.

Between 1212 and 1218 hours on the same day four Israeli warplanes flew north over the sea off the city of Tyre, at a distance of 10 miles from the coast, thus violating Lebanese airspace.

Between 1935 and 2320 hours on 30 January 2003 three Israeli reconnaissance aircraft carried out overflights, as follows: the first, heading east over the city of Tyre at a distance of 9 miles from the coast and circling between Riyaq and Zahle; the second, over the city of Tyre and northward at a distance of 10 miles from the coast; and the third, heading eastward over the sea west of the city of Sidon at a distance of 8 miles from the coast. The two last-mentioned aircraft together circled over the South and the area east of Sidon and reached Damur. They thus violated Lebanese airspace.

Between 0425 and 0630 hours on 31 January 2003 two Israeli reconnaissance aircraft flew eastward over the sea west of the city of Sidon at an altitude of 28,000 feet and circled over the area east of Sidon, thus violating Lebanese airspace.

Between 1100 and 1124 hours on the same day six Israeli warplanes flew north over the sea off the city of Tyre at a distance of 4 miles from the coast, after which four of them headed towards the Bekaa region and two, towards Shikka. They all circled between Shikka and Ghazir, thus violating Lebanese airspace.

At 2215 hours on 1 February 2003 an Israeli reconnaissance aircraft overflew the sea west of the city of Sidon at an extremely high altitude at a distance of 5 miles from the coast and circled between Sidon and Damur, then returned in the direction of the occupied territories at 0043 hours on 2 February 2003, thus violating Lebanese airspace.

At 1135 hours on 2 February 2003 eight Israeli warplanes overflew areas of the South and reached the regions of Kasrawan and the Bekaa, thus violating Lebanese airspace. Ground anti-aircraft batteries belonging to the Lebanese Army in the South and Bekaa regions targeted them, whereupon they returned in the direction of the occupied territories at 1200 hours.